



REGULATORY WATCH

A round up of the latest news from the world of communications and media policy

MAY 2026

EU prepares to ban social media for children

The European Union could announce a ban on the use of social media by children as soon as this summer, according to commission president Ursula von der Lyen. In a conference in Copenhagen she said 'I believe we must consider a social media delay'. A panel of experts are currently deliberating online child safety and, depending on the results, '...we could come up with a legal proposal this summer'. France is banning social media for under-15s in September and Austria is expected to follow suit with a ban for under-14s. The Dutch government supports an EU-wide ban, but it is opposed by countries including Estonia and Poland, who see it as a national power. (Daily Telegraph)

Italy busts streaming piracy ring

Italy's financial police have successfully shut down a piracy network thought to have cost streaming platforms over 300 million euros in lost revenue. The operation targeted an application called CINEMAGOAL which connected users' devices to foreign servers that illegally decrypted streaming content. The system captured and retransmitted access codes from legitimate subscriptions, bypassing platforms' security checks and avoiding connections directly associated with a specific IP address. Prosecutors secured the seizure of foreign servers storing decryption data and source code, with parallel operations in France and Germany. (Reuters)

Malaysia introduces age restrictions for online platforms

Malaysia has become the latest country to limit access to online platforms for younger users after its communications regulator, the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission, announced a series of new measures to be introduced from 1 June. Online service providers will be required to provide safeguards the limit account registration by users under the age of 16, alongside 'effective reporting and response mechanisms' and labelling of manipulated content where appropriate. The regulator said that a grace period will allow platforms to adapt to the new rules. Age verification for users will be introduced later this year. (Reuters)

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Canada triples financial contributions from US streamers

Large online streaming services will have to contribute 15 per cent of their Canadian revenues to Canadian content. The country's broadcast regulator, the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Authority (CRTC), announced the move as part of its implementation of the Online Streaming Act. The regulator had previously announced that the figure would be 5 per cent, a requirement which is already being challenged in court by US streamers including Apple, Amazon and Spotify. The CRTC argues that the contribution requirement is necessary to provide the funding for Canadian and indigenous content, such as French language content and news. Contributions from traditional broadcasters will be lowered from 30 and 45 per cent to 25 per cent. (AP News)

European Court confirms publisher's rights to 'fair compensation'

Platforms that use press publications online can be required to negotiate fair compensation with publishers after a ruling by the European Court of Justice. The legal case represents a victory for Italian regulator AGCOM, whose framework for enforcing platform's obligations had been challenged by Meta. The Italian rules are considered some of the most thorough in the world, including a 30 day negotiating window, fines for withholding data and a non-retaliation clause that forbids platforms from simply pulling out of market as they did in Canada, Australia and Spain. However, some critics argue that it favours the larger, traditional publishers and doesn't deal with the issue of training of AI models. (EU Observer)

EU legislators reach agreement on AI Omnibus

Members of the European Parliament have agreed on the content of the AI Omnibus, the regulation amending the AI Act. The proposal forms part of the broader simplification effort underpinned by the Draghi report, which aims to make the EU more competitive. Requirements for 'high risk' AI systems, set to take effect imminently, are postponed until December 2027 and, for some systems, August 2028. The text also confirms an expansion of the ability to use personal data for bias detection and correction to all AI systems. So-called 'nudifier tools' will be explicitly banned along with child sexual abuse material (CSAM). The legislative procedure must be completed by 2 August 2026. (techpolicy)

